

JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

NEWS

March 1997

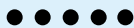
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Committee Membership Changes

JLARC wishes to recognize the contribution of those members who have recently left the committee, including Senators Rinehart and Deccio, and Representatives Silver, Horn, and Valle. We especially appreciate the contribution of Representative Jean Silver, who served many years as both a committee leader and member. Newly elected to the Senate, Val Stevens will remain on the committee, filling Senator Deccio's seat.



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Eugene Prince,
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Val Stevens
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(1 Vacancy)

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LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR

Cheryle A. Broom

JLARC Studies Promote Effective Allocation of Resources



Potential Millions in JRA Savings

JLARC's recent audit of the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) found that an estimated annualized savings of up to \$3.5 million could be achieved by using larger housing units and by consolidating two smaller facilities into larger institutions. Changes to the staffing model and housing policies could result in further savings of \$300,000 annually.

JLARC determined that JRA's planning process lacks the analytic tools and economic analyses of its capital alternatives that would have allowed it to identify such savings. By developing an ongoing master planning process that incorporates these elements, JRA can more cost-effectively respond to changing population forecasts.



Case Analysis Could Improve CPS Performance

A major finding of JLARC's performance audit of Child Protective Services (CPS) is that CPS' screening and assessment process is cautious, and devotes a large amount of resources to investigating referrals eventually determined to be unfounded or inconclusive.

CPS' approach, while consistent with its mandate to make child safety its priority, may result in additional demands on state resources and disruption to the family and child being investigated. JLARC recommends that CPS identify strategies to more quickly identify unfounded or inconclusive referrals, and thus free up agency resources currently used by these cases. JLARC has developed a model that can help CPS evaluate its success in implementing such agency performance improvement strategies.

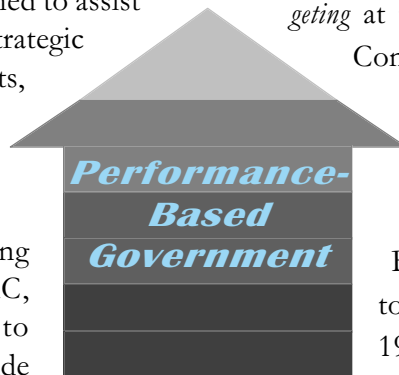
See *Resource Allocation* on page 2

Legislative Guide to the Bottom Line

Implementing Performance-Based Government

JLARC staff collaborated with LEAP, LTC, and OFM staff in developing a legislative guide for assessing performance-based government. Designed to assist legislators in their review of agencies' strategic plans, performance measures, and budgets, the guide provides key questions for legislators to ask agencies about their budget submittals.

This project is part of the continuing coordination efforts between JLARC, other fiscal committees, and OFM to facilitate the implementation of statewide performance-based government practices. Future plans include case studies on success in this implementation. ■



Management Fee Reduced

The Board of Natural Resources has decided to reduce the Forest Board Transfer Lands management fee to 22 percent. This action will provide more revenue for the counties and is consistent with JLARC's recommendation. ■

Other JLARC Reviews

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- ♦ Capital Planning and Budgeting Audit--Follow-up
- ♦ Nursing Home Reimbursement--Monitoring
- ♦ OSPI School Bus Purchasing Study--Review
- ♦ OSPI Performance Audit --Follow-up

For on-line versions of our studies, one-page summaries, and the committee's strategic plan, please check out the JLARC home page:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/www/lbc/>

STAFF NOTES

Cheryle A. Broom, Legislative Auditor, presented "Performance-Based Government Models: Continuing to Build a Track Record" to the Association of Budgeting and Financial Management. Discussing various states' progress in this area, this paper is an update to a previous article for which she received the Jesse Burkhead Award. Cheryle also gave a presentation on *performance-based budgeting* at the 1996 Pacific Islands Strategic Planning Conference, attended by government officials striving to develop sound financial management and program performance practices for their nations.

Bob Thomas, Principal Management Auditor/Supervisor, gave a presentation at the 1996 Training Conference of the National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society. Following the conference's theme of "Management Practices that Contribute to Getting Quality Studies to the Legislature on Time," Bob discussed how to translate legislative interests into researchable, or auditable questions. ■

Resource Allocation, con't.

• • • • • JLARC's study of K-12 **Expenditure Data** Supplemental Contracts found that supplemental **Key to Education** contract payments to certified staff have increased 150 percent over the last eight school years, and are increasing as a percentage of total compensation. A key reason behind the recent increase is the availability of the Student Learning Improvement Grants, which fund additional staff time and training required to implement education reform.

Staff analysis of contract use for academic performance assessment training showed that training cost data is not readily available. JLARC thus recommends the legislature identify its education reform training data requirements and instruct OSPI accordingly. ■